

Diff

Tuesday August 26, 2008

**Joe Hooper
1111 Montello Avenue NE
Washington, D.C. 20002**

**The Honorable Judge Sandra Feuerstein
U.S. District Court-E.D.N.Y.
100 Federal Plaza, Courtroom 1010
Central Islip, New York 11722**

Dear Judge Feuerstein:

My name is Joe Hooper. I am the biological father of Ashanti A. Harrell. According to information I received Ashanti is scheduled to be sentence in your courtroom on September 11, 2008. The criminal docket number for the case is 07-516 (S-1) (SJF). I emphasized biological father because for 21 years of Ashanti's life I was absent from his life. Ashanti unfortunately grew up thinking someone else was his biological father. I thank God, that person Fred Harrell was there as a father. When I met Ashanti's mother Sheila Harrell in Washington, D.C., she was married to Fred. Sheila and Fred were experiencing marital problems. Subsequently, Sheila and I became friends. Out of that "one time of intimacy" Sheila became pregnant. I never knew how to get in touch with Sheila. I always relied on her to contact me. When Sheila informed me Ashanti was my child, she asked me to obtain my blood type for paternity purposes. I responded and without a doubt it was a "match". However; Sheila decided without my consent to allow her husband to raise Ashanti as his child. At the time of this writing to my knowledge Fred continue to believe Ashanti is his biological child. I have never laid eyes on Fred. Again I never knew how to get in touch with Sheila whose residence was in the state of New York. It was 21 years later and with the help of modern technology I was able to "find my son" and I do love my son very much. I also recognize and appreciate the love and devotion Sheila has demonstrated throughout the years for Ashanti. Judge Feuerstein it's a long story and I know your work schedule is timely. Therefore, I will be brief and precise referencing the particulars.

Ashanti know the difference between right and wrong. He is not a stranger to the criminal justice system and he is not a "fool". However, his actions are foolish and selfish. Foolish in the sense of violating the law and selfishness in the sense of not considering the hurt and shame incarceration does to his mother, children and others who love and appreciate his existence. Ashanti and I have talked on subject matters referencing his adverse life style. I asked him several times to move to Washington D.C. to continue his education and obtain employment. Ashanti is always welcome to move into my household. Provided he is in compliance with the law of the land and striving to be morally upright. I am a property owner with plenty of space. In addition to living with me my mother would love to have her grandson Ashanti move into her residence with her. Ashanti has a support system here in Washington D.C. and the best of medical treatment facilities are available to address his ill health. Ashanti need to expedite getting his "mind together". Getting off and staying away from narcotics is a big jump start. Ashanti enjoys writing. As a matter of fact he published a novel titled "Heaven on Hell". I recently received from Ashanti two manuscripts. I have not had the time to submit the writings to a publisher or appropriate party for review. However, I will do a follow-up. I asked him repeatedly to pursue writing and appropriate courses to enhance his journalism and writing skills. I am aware of the fact Ashanti has been incarcerated multiple times in the past. However, this offense he recently pleaded guilty to carries more time he has ever encountered. Rightfully so and without a doubt he is "scared straight". Ashanti's battle with sickle cell anemia and other health complications have taken a toll on him. Ashanti stated to me in a telephone conversation that the jail staff was not making quality health care services available to him. He went further to say nobody cared about his sickness. My response was "stop going to jail" Obviously you don't care about your self. If you did you would not continue to jeopardize your life by doing illegal things. So stop blaming the system and begin to rehabilitate your self by changing your way of thinking one second at a time. Judge Feuerstein I strongly believe Ashanti has taken a thorough look at himself with a burning desire to turn his life around. In regard to incarceration Ashanti has many fears and one of those fears is dying in jail as a result of his extremely poor health. I told Ashanti to pray and when he finish

praying act out in a positive manner in order to bring about productive changes. Thank you very much Judge Feuerstein for taking time out of your schedule to read my thoughts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joe Hooper". The signature is fluid and extends to the right with a long, sweeping underline.

Joe Hooper

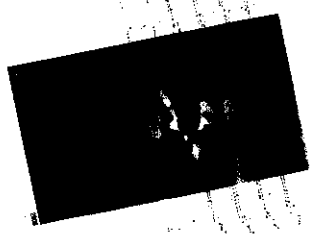
(202) 397-5163 or (202) 724-2361-day time

JOE HCOPEK
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